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Research Report

Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc. 485 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10017

MOVIE-GOING IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

October, 1981

Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc., 485 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017

This study is one of a series of marketing research reports prepared by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc., as a service to the newspaper industry and its advertisers. These reports form the basis of recommendations for the efficient use of the newspaper medium to meet the specific marketing needs of individual companies.

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Study Highlights

I. Changes in Movie-Going: 1973-1981

Movie-going is still popular in the U.S. and Canada. Nearly half of all moviegoers go at least once a month.

In 1973, 39 percent of the moviegoers in the U.S. went to the movies at least once a month, and in 1981, 47 percent went at least once a month.

While movie admissions wax and wane the overall trend since 1971 is upward.

Compared with 1973, the number of moviegoers who never attend on Monday or Tuesday but would if tickets were half price, rose nearly 20%.

As the baby boom generation matures, the percent of 18-29 year olds who are frequent moviegoers has declined by 15% since 1973, while those moviegoers over 30 have increased their share of the frequent movie attender category by 15%.

Moviegoers have become more careful and deliberate in planning a movie outing since 1973.

Moviegoers are looking at newspaper movie advertisements more often now than in 1973.

There has been a change in the percent of U.S. moviegoers who frequently or occasionally look at newspaper movie reviews, from 58 percent in 1973 to 68 percent in 1981.

II. Variations in Movie-Going

People with small children at home are typically moderate moviegoers, but they are more likely than most to want to go to the movies even more than they do now.

There is a large untapped movie market. People at every level of movie-going frequency want to go more than they do now; especially the moderate and infrequent attenders.

In the U.S. and Canada, for all ages, not enough time and money are the main reasons given for not going to the movies more often. But older adults, 35 and over cite poor film quality more often than the younger group.

All moviegoers, regardless of age, want to see more adult comedies and romances.

The younger and older moviegoers differ on the extent to which they like various special effects or vivid scenes in films; unusual space scenes, however, are liked by a majority of each age group.

Movies must be targeted to include the 25-44 age group; the fastest growing segment of the population.

III. What They Like and Dislike About Movies and Theaters

Most people agree that theaters add something to the movie experience that TV does not.

Overwhelmingly, the important features of movie theaters are that they provide no interruptions, are clean and attractive and have large screens.

80% of all moviegoers like Dolby Sound.

For moviegoers who feel theater size is important, the majority prefer a medium size theater.

About half of all moviegoers like multiplex theaters, few dislike them.

Nearly three-quarters of all moviegoers like food concessions, or think them a must.

New technologies such as cable TV and video cassette players could be a strong source of competition for movie theaters if theater owners do not maximize their own unique attractions. However, we believe these options will not supplant the theater-going experience, but will create a complementary situation where moviegoers who want to go to the movies more often are the same ones who own many of the new video options: in the U.S. and Canada, 34% have cable TV, 11% have subscription TV, and 5% own video cassette players.

IV. Movie Decision Making

Half of all moviegoers make their decision to go to the movies on the same day they go.

The majority of moviegoers, especially the older group, prefer to wait and see a new movie later on when theaters are less crowded or it is a more convenient time.

Moviegoing is seen as a chance to get out of the house and be with other people. Most go with a date, spouse, friends or family; very few go alone.

Moviegoers rate newspapers as the most useful medium for movie decisions.

Frequent moviegoers are more likely to recall a newspaper movie ad than a TV commercial.

About three-quarters of moviegoers look at newspaper movie advertisements: whenever they see the paper, often to see what's playing, occasionally even when not going.

70% of all moviegoers are encouraged to some degree by a positive review. Negative reviews have little to no effect.

Movie-Going in the United States and Canada

Movie-going is a popular form of entertainment in the United States and Canada. Sixty-one percent of North Americans said they had attended a movie in the past year. Nearly half (47%) of the United States sample said they go to movies at least once a month. Another 18 percent go five to six times a year. In Canada, 49 percent of a nationwide sample said they go at least once a month. In both countries, movies are considered to be a "good bargain," in these pressing economic times. In the United States only about a third (32%) said movies were not a "good bargain," compared to other forms of entertainment. Even fewer (26%) Canadians thought movies were not a "good bargain."

While movies are still a major way North Americans entertain themselves, there is a rapidly expanding challenge to the movie industry from a variety of sources that are exploiting the very latest in communication technology. Video cassettes, cable TV, and now direct satelite TV reception have the capability to deliver a first-run movie to individual homes.

The energy crunch has also made people more conscious of restricting the use of their automobiles. Might this cut into movie-going frequency?

Movie-going drops off rather sharply as young people move into their thirties. Why? Will that enormous bulge in the population pipeline called the "baby boomers," who are now approaching or are well into their thirties, follow the patterns of the past and begin to slow their movie-going?

For sure, the baby boomers' unprecedented numbers have added to the rise in movie attendance in the past decade. Now we must consider their impact on the movie industry as they and the nation get older.

These are some of the issues to be explored in this research report. We will also look at how movie-going has changed over the past eight years, what people like and dislike about movies and theaters, why they go to the movies, and how they make up their minds about films.

The Newspaper Advertising Bureau of New York has just completed a major study of movie-going, drawing nationwide samples from the United States and Canada, from which we will answer some of the questions that concern much of the movie industry. Some of the questions asked of this North American sample were asked of a nationwide (U.S.) sample in 1973, so we will be able to track some changes over time, rather than having to depend on a study fixed at one point in time. Here is how the study was done.

How the Study Was Done

R. H. Bruskin Associates was contracted to draw two nationwide samples, one from the United States and one from Canada. Both samples were from non-farm populations. The United States sample was composed of 1,005 randomly drawn people (520 females and 485 males) 18 years and older plus a supplementary sample of 345 people 18-49 (201 females and 144 males) for a total of 1350. The supplementary sample of people ages 18-49 was drawn to enhance

the numerical base on which detailed analysis were done. Except when indicated all data reported here reflect the combined samples, weighted to account for the overrepresentation of those 18-49 years old.

Telephone interviews were conducted with people in the United States sample on June 12-14, 1981 and with people in the supplementary sample on June 15, 1981.

The Canadian data were obtained through telephone interviews with 205 nonfarm Canadians through a random digit dialing procedure (100 males and 105 females). The random selection of telephone exchanges was accomplished by province, providing a stratified sample representative of all telephone households. Telephone interviewing was done during July 16-23, 1981. Completed interviews were weighted to reflect the population distribution of the separate provinces.

Different samples were used at different points in this research report, so the reader should be aware of when a specific sample or samples were employed. When over-time changes are analyzed, only data from a 1973 and the 1981 United States sample were used, since no Canadian data were available in 1973, our baseline year.

Generally, when age groups (18-34 years and 35-49 years) were looked at, only United States sample were used, since we overdrew people in these age ranges to ensure a sufficiently large base.

When combined national samples from the United States and Canada are used, the sample is weighted to approximate more closely the populations and to adjust for the overrepresentation of the age group 18-49 years old.

When references are made to the United States or Canada, samples from each of these countries served as the base.

I. Changes in Movie-Going: 1973-1981

Movie-going was a pervasive means of entertainment in 1973 when 59 percent of adults said they had attended a movie in the past year. Movie-going today persists as a widespread activity. In the 1981 study, 61 percent reported seeing a movie in the past year. This of course, is not a statistically significant increase in attendance, but when more detailed data are inspected (Table 1), we find a shift in movie-going frequency that reflects a substantial increase in relatively few years (8). The changes appear to be coming from a greater frequency of movie-going among people who attended less frequently in the past.

Table 1. Frequency of Movie-Going Among Those Who Have Gone in Past Year, 1973-1981 (U.S. Only)

Movie-Going Frequency	1973	1981	Percent Change
2-3 times a month or more	19%	25%	+6
About once a month	20%	22%	+2
5-6 times a year	27%	18%	-9
Less often	34%	35%	+1
	100%	100%	
Base: Past year movie-goers	(454)	(910)	

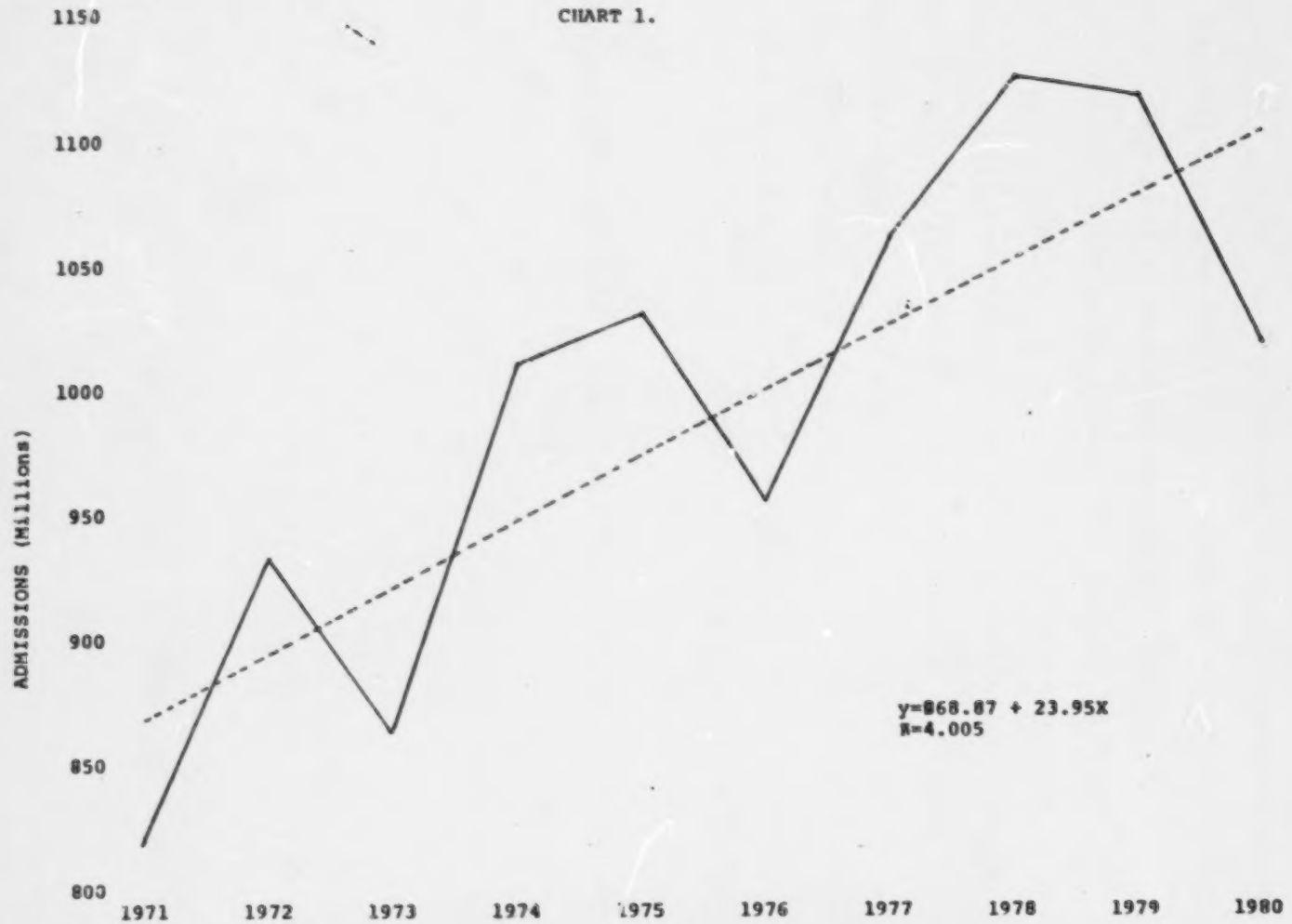
The frequency with which movie-goers see films has increased by 6 percent among the most frequent attenders (2-3 times a month or more) and by 2 percent among those going about once a month. Those going only 5-6 times a year have declined by 9 percent over the 8 year period, and the least frequent attenders have remained about the same.

Movie-going follows an erratic but upward trend, according to information on motion picture theater box office admissions (Chart 1). Starting with a low of 820 million in 1971, movie attendance has moved upward in cycles of ups and downs. The dotted line on Chart 1 represents the average of year-to-year attendance, and the calculations tell us that the actual year-to-year deviations from this line are not so great that they must be considered a random scatter. In other words, the actual year-to-year attendance forms a pattern that is moving upward toward greater attendance.

It is also of interest to note that the overall cycles of peaks and valleys become wider apart in years with each new cycle. The first cycle was from 1971 to 1973 (2 years), the next was from 1973 to 1976 (3 years), and the last was from 1976 to 1980 (4 years). If this pattern is to continue, we could expect that in the next few years, we could see movie attendance increasing again, with the between years cycle being a five year span.

While movie attendance has been increasing since 1973, 18 percent from 1973 to 1980, there have been some remarkable changes taking place over this 8 - year time span among frequent movie-goers, those who go at least 2-3 times a month.

CHART 1.



MOTION PICTURE THEATRES BOXOFFICE ATTENDANCE

Source: Motion Picture Association of America, Inc.

Demographic Profile of Frequent Movie-Goers

In 1973, the typical frequent movie-goer was 18-29 years old (72%) high school graduate (54%), and had a moderate (35%) to low (39%) income. Today, frequent movie-goers look demographically different (Table 2). In 1981, the frequent movie-goer is still typically young (57%) but there has been a substantial increase (5% to 17%) in the percentage of frequent movie-goers who are 50 years old or older. The typical frequent movie-goer now has at least some college (48%), and an income of at least $15,000 (80%). The value of a dollar in 1973, of course, is not the same as its value today. Nevertheless, when it is considered that 38 percent of frequent movie-goers in 1981 had family incomes of $25,000 or over, the affluence of frequent movie-goers is still apparent (data not shown).

Table 2. Frequent Movie-Goers by Age, Education and Income 1973-1981 (U.S. Only)

	Frequent Movie-Goers		
	1973	1981	Percent Change
Age:			
18-29 years	72%	57%	-15
30-49 years	23%	26%	+ 3
50 & over	5%	17%	+12
	100%	100%	
Base:	(90)	(224)	
Education:			
Some H.S. or less	13%	9%	- 4
H.S. graduate	54%	43%	-11
Some college or more	33%	48%	+15
	100%	100%	
Base:	(90)	(224)	
Income:			
Under $10,000	39%	11%	-28
$10,000 - $14,999	35%	9%	-26
$15,000 & over	26%	80%	+54
	100%	100%	
Base:	(90)	(217)	

What we have here is a shift toward an older and more sophisticated movie audience that the movie industry might do well to watch closely. There may be a comparable shift in film preferences and other movie-related concerns. The aging baby boom generation, with its extraordinary numbers, will insure this trend toward an older and more sophisticated audience.

Monday/Tuesday Movie Attendance

A perennial problem for movie theaters is how to get more people in theaters on Monday and Tuesday. Apparently, from the data in Table 3, not much has changed in this problem, since about the same percentage (47% in 1973 and 45% in 1981) said they have gone to a movie on Monday or Tuesday. However, compared to 1973, theaters have a greatly improved chance now to increase attendance on these days. In 1973, over a third (35%) of those who said they had not gone to a Monday/Tuesday movie said they would go if tickets were half price. That percentage has swelled to over half (53%) in 1981; more people now are motivated by price incentives.

Table 3. Monday/Tuesday Movie Attendance, 1973-1981 (U.S. Only)

	1973	1981	Percent Change
Have gone to movie on Monday/ Tuesday	47%	45%	-2
Base: Past year movie-goers	(454)	(910)	
Would go if half price	35%	53%	+18
Base: Movie-goers who never attend movie on Monday/ Tuesday	(242)	(482)	

When the Movie-Going Decision is Made

How far in advance do you usually decide to go to the movies? This question was asked of national samples in 1973 and 1981. For both samples, about half said they made their movie-going decision the same day that they went. However, movie-goers in 1981 were more likely (45%) than movie-goers in 1973 (37%) to make the decision at least one day in advance. Those in 1973, on the other hand, were more prone (11% vs. 5%) to say they don't know or it varies. So, to some extent, people now are more premeditative about movie decisions.

Table 4. When Decision to go to Movies is Made, 1973-1981 (U.S. Only)

	1973	1981	Percent Change
Same day, right then	52%	50%	-2
At least one day in advance	37%	45%	+8
Don't know/it varies	11%	5%	-6
	100%	100%	
Base: Past year movie-goers	(454)	(910)	

Movie Advertisements and Reviews in Newspapers

In 1973 newspapers were a vital source of information about movies. So they are today, but some noticeable changes have taken place (Table 5). While past month's recall of seeing newspaper movie advertisements have remained unchanged at 86% over the past eight years, recall of TV commercials has increased from 78 percent in 1973 to 88 percent in 1981.

Table 5. Recall of Past Months Movie Ads and Commercials, 1973-1981 (U.S. Only)

	1973	1981	Percent Change
Recall Seeing:			
Newspaper ads	86%	86%	0
TV commercials	78%	88%	+10
Base: Past year movie-goers	(454)	(915)	

The use of newspaper advertisements goes beyond attention and recall. There is an intention to seek information in newspaper advertising that is not present in TV commercial exposure. A small proportion look at newspaper ads only when they want to go to the movies. But a large and increasing proportion try to keep track of what is playing day by day. This is consistent with the trend toward more deliberation in deciding to go to the movies. Almost everyone looks at newspaper ads at some time or another (92% in 1981; 94% in 1973) but three out of four (75%) in the

1981 study say that they look at movies ads when they read the paper (either everytime, often or occasionally). In the 1973 study, the comparable figure was 67 percent. The other side of the coin is that fewer in 1981 only look at movie ads when they want to go to the movies.

Table 6. Frequency of Looking at Movie Ads in Newspapers, 1973-1981 (U.S. Only)

	1973	1981	Percent Change
Look at Newspaper Movie Ads:	94%	92%	-2
Almost everytime, often or occasionally look to see what's playing	67%	75%	+8
Only when I want to go to the movies	27%	17%	-10
Never	6%	8%	+2
	100%	100%	
Base: Past year movie-goers	(454)	(915)	

The frequency of looking at movie reviews in newspapers has increased as well (Table 7). Movie reviews are attracting more attention these days. In 1973 a quarter of the movie-goers looked at newspaper movie reviews, "everytime they're in the newspaper" or "most of the time." This percentage has increased to 29 percent by 1981. Those who look at movie reviews "occasionally" has increased by 6 percent, from one-third in 1973 to 39 percent in 1981. In total, that means a 10 percent increase in looking at movie reviews.

Table 7. Frequency of Looking at Newspaper Movie Reviews, 1973-1981 (U.S. Only)

Look at Newspaper Movie Reviews:	1973	1981	Percent Change
Everytime they're in the newspaper or most of the time	25%	29%	+4
Occasionally	33%	39%	+6
Hardly ever	38%	31%	-7
No movie review in the newspaper	4%	1%	-3
	100%	100%	
Base: Past year moviegoers	(454)	(612)	

This change revives old questions about the role of reviews in movie-going decisions, an issue that has not received research attention in the past, but will be considered more closely later in this report.

In this rare opportunity to look at changes taking place in movie behavior, we have seen the importance of taking a careful look at older people and the movies, of economic incentives for increasing Monday/Tuesday attendance, of the greater planned, premeditative approach to movie-going decisions, and newspapers' role in the process. We have first looked at general indicators and changes. Now, we will consider the details and nuances of these general findings.

II. Variations in Movie-Going

In this chapter, we will look at three things: (1) how movie-going varies among different types of people, (2) how the "baby boom" generation affects the movie industry, and (3) why people attend movie less frequently after they reach their mid-thirties.

From the beginning of this research report, the popularity of movies in US/Canada has been noted. Sixty-one percent have attended a movie in the past year. And as the findings in Table 8 show, a quarter of those in the US/Canada sample go to the movies at least two to three times a month. Another 22 percent go about once a month, and 36 percent go three to six times a year.

Age and Movie-Going

It is not news, of course, that young people attend movies more often than older adults, and in Table 8, we see this clearly with 44 percent of those 18-20 years old going to movies at least two-three times a month. Another 26 percent go once a month. However, when the 18-20 years old or even the 18-34 years old group is compared to the 35 years old and older group, a definite shift in movie-going patterns is clearly apparent. Before age 35, movie-going is a monthly or even weekly activity. After age 34, movie-going becomes a few-times-a-year activity. Nearly two thirds (63%) of those 35 and older attend six times a year or less often.

Table 8. Movie-Going Frequency in US/Canada, by Age

Movie-Going Frequency	Age			
	Total	18-20	18-34	35 & over
At least 2-3 times a month	25%	44%	31%	18%
About once a month	22%	26%	25%	19%
5-6 times a year	18%	15%	18%	18%
3-4 times a year	18%	10%	16%	20%
Less often	17%	5%	10%	25%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Weighted Base: Movie-goers in US/Canada	(738)	(94)	(418)	(312)

The same pattern is true whether it is movie-goers in the United States or Canada. In Table 9 movie-going frequency has been grouped into frequent (at least 2-3 times a month), moderate (once a month or 5-6 times a year), and infrequent (less than 5 times a year) and results for the United States and Canada samples are shown separately. Similar patterns occur for both countries, but in the United States, the youngest age group and the oldest age groups are more likely to be frequent movie-goers that their counterparts in Canada.

Table 9. Movie-Going Frequency, by Age

Movie-Going Frequency	United States Total	18-20	18-34	35 & over
Frequent	25%	46%	31%	18%
Moderate	40%	38%	42%	37%
Infrequent	35%	16%	27%	45%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(910)	(115)	(577)	(324)

Movie-Going Frequency	Canada Total	18-20	18-34	35 & over
Frequent	26%	38%	31%	10%
Moderate	42%	54%	46%	30%
Infrequent	32%	8%	23%	60%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(128)	(24)	(97)	(30)

Education and Movie-Going

Generally education has a close association with much of human behavior. But in the case with movie behavior, the association of education and movie-going frequency is not very apparent (Table 10). About equal percentages of people in the different age groups are frequent attenders in each country, and the percentage differences between countries are small.

Table 10. Education and Movie-Going Frequency

United States

Movie-Going Frequency	Education: Less than H.S. Grad.	H.S. Grad.	Some College or More
Frequent	25%	27%	24%
Moderate	37%	37%	43%
Infrequent	38%	36%	33%
	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(88)	(352)	(446)

Canada

Movie-Going Frequency	Education: Less than H.S. Grad.	H.S. Grad.	Some College or More
Frequent	29%	24%	26%
Moderate	37%	43%	45%
Infrequent	34%	33%	29%
	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(35)	(42)	(51)

Income and Movie-Going Frequency

Like education, family income has little association with movie-going frequency in the United States (Table 11). There are no great differences between income levels in the frequency of movie attendance. However, in Canada, those with the lowest income level are substantially more likely than those in higher income levels to be frequent attenders. On the other hand, the lowest income level is also more likely than higher income levels to be infrequent attenders.

Table 11. Family Income and Movie-Going Frequency

United States

Movie-Going Frequency	Family Income: Under $10,000	$10,000 $24,999	$25,000 or over
Frequent	31%	24%	26%
Moderate	39%	40%	40%
Infrequent	30%	36%	34%
	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(66)	(357)	(405)

Canada

Movie-Going Frequency	Family Income: Under $10,000	$10,000 $24,999	$25,000 or over
Frequent	39%	27%	25%
Moderate	21%	41%	46%
Infrequent	40%	32%	29%
	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(10)	(47)	(55)

Marriage, Children and Movie-Going

Being young and without family responsibilities apparently make movie-going much easier. Indeed, age and family ties probably have a common dimension insofar as both involve different levels of social independence and freedom to make even last minute decisions about going somewhere. Just as young people have a greater degree of this freedom than older people, single and childless people have greater mobility and freedom than married people, especially those with children of a young age.

The findings in Table 12 add consistent and strong support for this claim. Movie-goers in the United States who are household heads and have at least one child 11 years old or younger at home were least likely (14%) to go to movies frequently (at least 2-3 times a month). Compare this to single people, of whom 41 percent were frequent movie-goers. Nearly half (43%) of those heads of household with young children went to movies less than 5 times a year (infrequent). Married movie-goers, who might also have children, had a movie-going frequency pattern that was very close to that of household heads with young children.

A similar pattern occurs among Canadian movie-goers (Table 12). Single people are considerably more likely to go to the movies more often than people with marriage and family responsibilities or those who are separated, divorced or widowed. In Canada, however, this latter group is the least likely to go to the movies, but those results may be due to the small sample base (12) rather than a true behavioral difference.

Table 12. Marital Status & Presence of Child 11 Years Old & Under: Movie-Going Frequency

United States

Movie-Going Frequency	Head of House/Child 11 & Under	Married	Separated Widowed, Divorced	Single
Frequent	14%	16%	24%	41%
Moderate	43%	39%	36%	44%
Infrequent	43%	45%	40%	15%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(321)	(499)	(124)	(286)

Canada

Movie-Going Frequency	Head of House/Child 11 & Under	Married	Separated Widowed, Divorced	Single
Frequent	20%	18%	25%	36%
Moderate	45%	41%	25%	48%
Infrequent	35%	41%	50%	16%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(34)	(65)	(12)	(50)

The limitations that a child in the family puts on movie-going are also evident from the results in Table 13. Respondents were asked how often they would like to go to the movies compared to how often they go now. The majority of people, regardless of the presence of children in the household said they wanted to go more than they do now. However, the more young children at home, especially of ages six and under, the more likely they were to say they would like to go to the movies more than they do now. Hence, there is a sizeable percentage who would probably go to movies more often if they did not have constraints of a child. The exception is in Canada, where having a child 6-11 years old makes little difference in the desire to go to the movies more often. It might be well worth considering how movies theaters might assist parents with young children at home to be able to go to the movies more than they do.

Table 13. Presence of Child 6-11 Years Old and Desire to go to Movies More Than Now

United States

	Have Child 6-11 Years Old		
	None	1	2 or More
Want to go to movies more often than now	53%	53%	61%

	Have Child Under 6 Years Old		
	None	1	2 or More
Want to go to movies more often than now	51%	62%	68%

Canada

	Have Child 6-11 Years Old		
	None	1	2 or More
Want to go to movies more often than now	49%	51%	48%

	Have Child Under 6 Years Old		
	None	1	2 or More
Want to go to movies more often than now	43%	66%	75%

Who Would Like to Go to the Movies More Than They Do?

Well over half of all movie-goers would like to go more than they do. This gives the movies a large untapped market. Are there clues about the characteristics of this untapped market? As with many other product categories, movies can probably increase attendance more easily by influencing those who occasionally go to movies, rather than those who rarely or never go.

This untapped movie market is found at every level of movie attendance, but those who go infrequently are the most likely to say they would like to go more than they now do (Table 14). Sixty-one percent of the infrequent movie-goers in the United States said they would like to go more than they do now. Even among the frequent goers (at least 2-3 times a month), 46 percent would like to go more. Only a very small minority (2%) wanted to go less often than they now go.

The pattern is much the same in Canada, where infrequent movie-goers are most likely (58%) to want to go more than they now do. Thirty-nine percent of the frequent and 48 percent of the moderate movie-goers say they would like to go more.

Table 14. Movie-Going Frequency & Desire to Go to Movies More Than Now

United States

	Movie-Going Frequency		
	Frequent	Moderate	Infrequent
How often like to go to movies			
More than now	46%	52%	61%
About as often as now	52%	45%	37%
Less than now	2%	3%	2%
	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(223)	(373)	(314)

Canada

	Movie-Going Frequency		
	Frequent	Moderate	Infrequent
How often like to go to movies			
More than now	39%	48%	58%
About as often as now	53%	51%	42%
Less than now	3%	1%	-
Don't know/no response	5%	-	-
	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(32)	(54)	(41)

Movie-goers who would like to go more than they do are important not only because they would like to go to the movies more than they do, but because they are more willing than the population as a whole to go to Monday/Tuesday movies, if tickets were half price. Sixty-one percent of the US/Canada sample who would like to go more would go if the price was half the normal cost, compared to 53 percent of the general population.

We also see in Table 15 that price is one of the main reasons people in both countries give for not going to movies as frequently as they would like. Only the time factor (too busy) is mentioned as a reason (47%) more than price (33%). Furthermore, we see in Table 15, price is more often a formidable barrier to movie-going for young people (40%) while the poor quality of films is a relatively more important reason for older adults (28%).

Table 15. Reasons for not Going to Movies as Often as One Would Like
US/Canada Combined

	Would Like to go More		
	Total	18-34	35 & over
Reasons:			
Not enough time	47%	48%	46%
Price/economy	33%	40%	30%
Poor quality films	20%	12%	28%
Child-related	7%	11%	7%
Other people/no one to go with	4%	5%	4%
Other	14%	13%	10%
	(% add to more than 100% due to multiple responses)		
Weighted base: Those who would like to go to the movies more	(392)	(306)	(124)

Since there are about the same proportions of movie-goers who are 18-34 years old (55%) as movie-goers who are at least 35 years old (50%) who would like to go more than they do, and since price and film quality are concerns of those two age groups, a two-pronged approach to get them into theaters more often is suggested. Avoiding further price increase or encouraging Monday/Tuesday movie attendance at reduced prices would attract the younger set and older people to some extent. Recognizing the need for better film quality would tap some of the pent up movie-going urge among older North Americans. For older movie-goers, "poor quality" in films mainly means that there are not enough films that families can see and that the number of films that appeal to people over 34 years old is too limited.

Here Come the Baby Boomers and is There Life After 35?

In this section we will begin to look more specifically at that important market expanding generation, the baby boomers, who are now about age 18-34. At the same time, we will consider those movie-goers who are 35 years old and older to try to answer that nagging question of why older adults change their movie-going behavior rather sharply when they reach their mid-thirties. To do so, we over-sampled people who were age 18-34 and ages 35-49 to provide a large sampling base for detailed breakdowns of the data. Since this over-sampling was done only in the United States, the conclusions about age differences will be based only on United States data, but given the similarity of movie-going behavior people in the United States and Canada, much of what is said here could relatively safely be generalized to Canada as well.

In the 1970s, the single fastest-growing age group was 25 to 34, mushrooming from 25 million to 36 million. In the next decade, the 35 to 44 age bracket will be the fastest growing segment, exploding by an extraordinary 50 percent by the end of the 1980s.

Their sheer numbers demand our attention, as they did in earlier years, when their presence was training the society at every level. Now they are beginning to move into that age period when movie-going traditionally drops off abruptly. So our concern here is two-sided; how will the baby boom generation alter movie-going as they age, and what are some of the reasons movie-going frequency declines in older adulthood? These are questions that will be raised in remaining chapters of this report as well.

We have shown that economic reasons are a prime reason young people give for not going to movies as much as they would like, while "poor film quality" is a factor that also discourages older adults. The importance of film quality shows up again in Table 16, which shows the finding from a question about the quality of movies now compared to five years ago.

Table 16. Quality of Movies Compared to Five Years Ago, by Age

	United States Only			Canada
Movie-Quality:	All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old	All Ages
Better	33%	40%	30%	39%
Same	27%	27%	30%	31%
Somewhat worse	24%	23%	22%	20%
Much worse	15%	10%	17%	7%
Don't know	1%	-	1%	3%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(910)	(551)	(223)	(206)

Those under 35 rate movies, more highly than those 35 and older, by comparison with movies of five years ago. Canadian movie-goers are a little more likely than United States movie-goers to judge movies as "better."

There are also some sizeable differences between the two age groups with regard to types of movies they would like to see more of (Table 17). The baby-boomers prefer to see more of all the listed types of movies, compared to older adults. Nevertheless, both age groups prefer the various types of movie in identical rank orders, with adult comedies such as Neil Simon and Mel Brooks leading the list, and Kung Fu films ranking last. For both groups comic relief and romance films are the type they would most want more of. Despite this preference for escapism, it is noteworthy that serious films with social-psychological themes would appeal to the majority of young people and adults. For example, 24 percent of the baby-boomers

had seen the social-psychological film "Ordinary People," and slightly more (29%) of those 34-49 years old said they had seen the film.

Table 17. Types of Movies They Would Like to See More of, by Age

	United States Only	
Movie Type:	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Adult comedy (Neil Simon)	76%	63%
Romance	64%	58%
Slap stick (Jerry Lewis)	60%	53%
Social/psychological	53%	50%
Science fiction	43%	38%
Exorcism/sorcery	36%	22%
Horror/monster	29%	14%
Kung fu	15%	10%
Base: Movie-goers	(549)	(221)

Sharper differences between the baby-boomers and older adults are observable in Table 18, which presents the results of a question about some special effects and scenes they like or dislike in films. While the rank order of the various types of film scenes is more or less the same for each age group, the percentage differences are large. Certainly vivid outer space scenes are liked by most movie-goers in each age category, even though, as in all previous tables, baby-boomers like these vivid scenes more than the older movie-goers. Although vivid wounding or killing scenes in movies seems

Table 18. Film Special Effects, by Age

Special Effect	% of US Movie-Goers Who Like: 18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Unusual space scenes	69%	60%
Vivid fire/explosions/ crash scenes	43%	31%
Vivid sex scenes	34%	17%
Vivid horror scenes	33%	15%
Vivid wounding/killing scenes	19%	14%
Base: Movie-goers	(551)	(223)

to be increasingly present in films, only a small minority of each age group say they like them. The greatest age difference occurs with films that have vivid sexual scenes, and young people like these kinds of scenes considerably more than older movie-goers.

Age differences are not a major story in these results. In fact, the basic difference is that older movie-goers are looking for a better quality movie that relies less on the comedy, exorcism/sorcery, and horror/monster themes and that does not have as much vivid photography of explosion/crash, sex, and horror scenes.

III. What They Like and Dislike About Movies and Theaters

The question of old and new sources of competition for the movie theater will be explored in greater detail shortly. Meanwhile, consider the responses in Table 19 to our question about the relative merits of a movie in a theater or on a TV screen. About two-thirds of our samples in the United States (61%) and Canada (67%) agreed that seeing a movie in a theater adds something to the experience that TV does not. Again, the younger generation in the United States is more pro-theater than older adults, with nearly three-quarters (74%) of the baby-boomers agreeing versus 61 percent of those who are ages 35 to 49. So the movie theater still has special qualities that continue to be attractive to a large part of the general population in the two countries, and especially to younger people.

Table 19. Theaters Add Something to the Movies Experience that TV does Not, by Age

		United States Only		
	Canada	All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Agree	67%	61%	74%	61%
Neither agree nor disagree	15%	16%	13%	13%
Disagree	18%	22%	13%	26%
Don't know	-	1%	-	-
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Total sample	(206)	(1350)	(656)	(336)

What Kind of Films Would They Like More of?

Movie-goers in Canada and the United States put adult comedies like those by Mel Broooks and Neil Simon at the top of the list (Table 20). About two-thirds want more films like these. At the bottom of the list are Kung Fu and horror-monster films. More slapstick comedy films and romantic films would also be welcomed by our national samples. And a majority (51% in the U.S. and 63% in Canada) would like to see more social/psychological films. By and large, the two countries do not differ greatly in their film preferences, but more Canadians than movie-goers in the United States would like more slapstick, social/psychological, and exorcism/sorcery.

Table 20. Type of Films They Would Like More of

Type of Film	United States	Canada
Adult comedy (Neil Simon)	69%	66%
Romance	62%	64%
Slapstick comedy (Jerry Lewis)	56%	68%
Social/psychological	51%	63%
Science fiction	37%	35%
Exorcism/sorcery	28%	41%
Horror/monster	21%	26%
Kung Fu	14%	20%
Weighted base: Movie-goers	(610)	(128)

Special Effects in Films

At the first glance at the results in Table 21, one might wonder if the elaborate special effects in movies these days are winning the hearts of North Americans, since the percentage who say they like them is not impressive. Most say "it depends," except for unusual space effects, which are well received by a majority of movie-goers. The most important meaning in these results is probably that movie-goers do not give special effects unqualified approval. The more educated and sophisticated movie-goers of today like these special effects only when they meet their level of good taste. Very few say they definitely do not like these special effects.

Table 21. Special Effects in Films

	US/Canada Movie-goers				
Special Effect	Like	It Depends	Don't Like	Don't Know	
Unusual space scenes	60%	28%	11%	1%	100%
Vivid fire/explosion/ crash scenes	38%	40%	20%	2%	100%
Vivid horror scenes	25%	63%	11%	1%	100%
Vivid sexual scenes	27%	50%	22%	1%	100%
Vivid wounding/killing scenes	16%	65%	18%	1%	100%

Weighted Base: US/Canada Movie-goers for each effect = 738

Dolby sound and stereo sound have also added a great deal to the movie-going experience (Table 22), especially for the younger generation.

Table 22. Dolby Sound and Stereo in the Movies, by Age

Dolby/Stereo Special Effects	Canada	United States Only All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Yes like it	81%	79%	83%	76%
Depends	6%	6%	4%	10%
No, don't like it	11%	10%	9%	10%
Don't know	2%	5%	4%	4%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(127)	(614)	(551)	(223)

Dolby and stereo sound at the movies are undoubtedly part of the reasons that so many people think that a movie in a theater adds something to the experience that television does not do.

Theater Ambience

What else is there about movie theaters that still makes movie-going a big entertainment attraction? Certainly the cleanliness and attractiveness of theaters is important (Table 23), as might be expected. What might not be so well recognized is the fact that nearly everyone thinks an important feature of movie houses is that one can go there and have the minimum of the distractions that are so frustrating to at-home viewers of TV movies. Even the baby-boomers say this is important. This is also reflected in the fact that 64 percent of the movie-goers in the United States sample and 61 percent of Canadians say that going to a movie in a theater gives them a chance

to get out of the house. While this is more evident among the younger generation (69%), a large number (59%) of older adults consider this an important part of enjoying a movie in a theater.

Having other people in the theater is important to a majority of movie-goers (63% in Canada and 54% in the U.S.) a feature that apparently enriches the movie experience through a group's social contagion.

Table 23. Important Features of Enjoying a Movie in a Theater, by Age

		United States Only		
Important Feature	Canada	All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
No interruptions	97%	96%	96%	96%
Clean/attractive	99%	95%	96%	92%
Large screen	82%	81%	84%	81%
Chance to get out of house	61%	64%	69%	59%
Other people in the theater	63%	54%	54%	48%
Theater size	41%	34%	39%	33%
Base: Movie-goers	(128)	(610)	(549)	(221)

The large screen in theaters is definitely an important part of an enjoyable movie experience (8 out of 10), but the size of the theater seems relatively unimportant (41% of Canadian and 34% of U.S. movie-goers say it is important). Table 24 presents a more detailed breakdown of preferences in the size of theater among those who say that theater is important. Of the movie-goers who think theater size is important, the majority prefer a medium size theater. Few would choose a small theater. Young people are more likely than older people to prefer a large theater, which is a statistically significant difference.

Table 24. Preferred Theater Size for Those Who Consider Size Important, by Age

		United States Only		
Theater Size	Canada	All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old.	35-49 Yrs. Old
Large	37%	33%	36%	24%
Medium	55%	56%	55%	64%
Small	8%	9%	8%	11%
Don't know	-	2%	1%	1%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(51)	(207)	(215)	(72)

The proliferation of multiplex theaters seems also to be in harmony with people's preferences. Relatively few Canadian or United States movie-goers dislike multiplex theaters (Table 25); about equal numbers feel indifferent about them. However, the majority of baby-boomers like them (53%) more than older movie-goers (43%).

Table 25. Preference for Multiplex Theaters, by Age

		United States Only		
	Canada	All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Like them	52%	47%	53%	43%
Neither like nor dislike	37%	40%	35%	44%
Dislike them	11%	13%	12%	13%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(128)	(610)	(549)	(221)

Food concessions are a traditional part of the movie theater, and are a significant source of revenue for theater owners(Table 26). Generally movie-goers in Canada and the United States are favorably disposed. Only a few object to food concessions in the theater (6% to 7%), while there is a sizeable percentage (20%) who feel that the concession is a "must" for their movie-going enjoyment.

Table 26. Importance of Food Concessions in the Theater

Food Concessions:	United States	Canada
A must	20%	20%
Like, but not a must	27%	30%
Like, but wouldn't miss them	29%	23%
Neither like nor dislike	18%	20%
Should take them out of theaters	6%	7%
	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(610)	(126)

The Movies' Technological Competitors

New electronic developments are rapidly changing our way of life, but will it change movies-in-the-theater habits? A recent Wall Street Journal article (August 19, 1981) about the disappearance of movie houses attributed their demise in large part to the expanding cable TV and video cassette field. The article quotes the president of the National Association of Theater Owners, Richard Orear, as saying, "I know there isn't any way to stop technology, but we've got to establish the value of showing motion pictures in theaters." Mr. Orear expresses both the anxiety that many theater owners feel and the way to alleviate the problem. This study confirms Orear's idea of how to deal with the problem. It also sheds some light on the reality of the threat from new technology to the theater business.

While it is true that some of the facts would support a dismal view of movies' future, a closer look at the data suggests that movies and the new technology may be synergistic -- they may help each other.

First the negatives. The new technological advances are bringing larger screens into homes, better sound, cable TV, subscription TV and now even direct satellite reception in the home. Certainly these are good reasons for concern among theater owners. Furthermore, except for ownership of video cassette players, the younger generation (the best movie-goers) is more likely than the older generation to have these special TV services. One would be tempted to infer that these people would move away from movies, in the future. Indeed, as Table 27 shows, about a third of Canadian and United States movie-goers, including those who would like to go to movies more often plan to buy video cassette players in the future.

Table 27. Ownership of Video Cassette Players, Cable TV Memberships, and Subscription TV, by Age

Own or Subscribe	Canada	US/Canada Movie-goers Who Would Like to Go to Movies More	United States Only		
			All Ages	18-34 Yrs. old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Cable TV	56%	34%	35%	38%	33%
Subscription TV	5%	11%	13%	15%	13%
Video Cassette Player	8%	5%	7%	5%	8%
Base: Movie-goers	(127)	(394)	(614)	(549)	(221)
Plan to Buy Video Cassette Player	33%	35%	30%	33%	26%
Base: Do not own Video cassette Player	(117)	(373)	(573)	(523)	(206)

But there are also positive facts. People still find the experience of seeing a film in a theater an important advantage over home television movies, as has been established by this report. Except for Canada, only a minority have cable and even fewer have subscription TV. Fewer still own video cassettes.

When we consider those who believe that seeing a movie in a theater has advantages over seeing a movie on TV, we see in Table 28 that these are the people who are most likely to buy a video cassette player in the future, and they are more likely to buy than even those who prefer TV movies. This suggests that many people like movies and they like them so well that they like to see them in the theaters and at home. While no single study can prove something conclusively, there is reason here to believe that movie theaters have a special attraction to movie-goers. Video cassettes could have a bonus effect for theaters by encouraging movie-going in the theater rather than discouraging movie theater attendance.

Table 28. Those Who Prefer a Movie in a Theater Over TV Movies and Future Purchases of Video Cassette Players

Prefer Theater to TV Films	United States Video Cassette Player				Base: Don't Own Video Cassette
	Will Buy	Will Not Buy	Don't Know		
Agree	29%	70%	1%	100%	(585)
Neither agree nor disagree	13%	86%	1%	100%	(150)
Disagree	21%	78%	1%	100%	(206)

Prefer Theater to TV Films	Canada Video Cassette Player				Base: Don't Own Video Cassette
	Will Buy	Will Not Buy	Don't Know		
Agree	36%	64%	-	100%	(129)
Neither agree nor disagree	22%	78%	-	100%	(28)
Disagree	20%	80%	-	100%	(35)

IV. Movie Decision Making

In a previous chapter of this report, it was found that movie-goers are becoming less likely to make a decision to see a movie on the same day they go. In other words, they are making fewer snap judgements about going to the movies. Consistent with that more careful approach to movie-going decision making are the changes taking place in the use of newspapers. People are making more use of newspapers in the movie decision process. Looking at movie advertisements more frequently has increased, and references to newspaper movie reviews has expanded in the period since 1973.

Here we will look more closely at this important process of making decisions about movies, considering once again the comparison between the younger baby boom generation and older adults, as well as Canadian and United States comparisons.

When They Make Their Decisions

Movie decisions have typically been made the same day that one goes to the movies. Half (50%) of all movie-goers in the United States and 48 percent of Canadians make their decision on the same day they go (Table 29). This is changing, as we have seen. Decisions are made increasingly in advance. As movie-goers become older, however, more advanced planning takes place.

Table 29. Time of Movie-Going Decision, by Age

Time of Decision	Canada All Ages	United States Only All Ages	United States Only 18-34 Yrs. Old	United States Only 35-49 Yrs. Old
Same day	48%	50%	54%	45%
1 to a few days before	38%	36%	33%	35%
A week or more before	9%	9%	8%	14%
Don't know/it varies	5%	5%	5%	6%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(128)	(910)	(549)	(221)

Most movie-goers do not want to see a movie right after it comes out, but prefer to see it later (Table 30). The preference is the same in Canada and the United States.

Table 30. Urgency of Seeing a New Movie, by Age

When to See a New Movie	Canada All Ages	United States Only All Ages	United States Only 18-34 Yrs. Old	United States Only 35-49 Yrs. Old
Right after it comes out	30%	30%	34%	18%
Later	70%	70%	66%	82%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(125)	(910)	(549)	(221)

Compared to those 35-49 years old, more of the baby boomers feel an urge to see a new film as soon as it comes out. However, even among the younger generation two-thirds prefer to go later.

Movie-Going as a Social Occasion

Few people enjoy going to the movies alone. Only 4 percent in the United States and 2 percent in Canada said they usually went to the movies by themselves (Table 31). This social aspect of movie-going is characteristic of both the young and old in the United States.

Table 31. Who They Go to the Movies With, by Age

	Canada	United States Only		
Go With	All Ages	All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Alone	2%	4%	4%	3%
Date/spouse	51%	53%	57%	51%
Friends	26%	20%	23%	9%
Family	20%	23%	16%	37%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(128)	(738)	(549)	(221)

Most go with a date or spouse, regardless of age. The only substantial difference between age groups is that the young movie-goer is more likely to go with friends and the older group more likely to go with their family.

The Movie Mood

For some people going to the movies is a matter of being in the mood. Once in the appropriate mood they decide what to see. Others find themselves interested in a specific movie and then find the time to go.

Most movie-goers in our study prefer the latter alternative (Table 32). Seventy- five percent said they first select a movie that they would be interested in seeing, and then make the arrangements to go to the movies. The more deliberate older adults are more likely than the baby boomers to first choose a specific movie and then go, rather than going just when the mood hits them (statistically significant difference).

Table 32. Movie Mood vs. Specific Movie, by Age

Respondent Best Described by:	Canada All Ages	United States Only All Ages	United States Only 18-34 Yrs. Old	United States Only 35-49 Yrs. Old
First get in the mood to go, then find specific movie	25%	22%	27%	20%
First get interest in specific movie, then find time to go	75%	78%	73%	80%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(128)	(910)	(549)	(221)

Movie Advertising

Whether it is just to "see what's on" or to get oneself in a movie-going mood, to select a specific movie, or to select a theater, movie-goers often turn to the media for information. According to the results in Table 33, newspaper movie advertisements are their most important media source for this information. About half of the United States and Canada samples say that newspapers are the most useful media to rely on when deciding what

movie to see, regardless of age. By contrast, 42 percent of the United States and 37 percent of the Canadian samples said TV commercials were the most useful.

Table 33. Useful Media for Movie Decisions, by Age

	Canada	United States Only		
Most Important Media	All Ages	All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Newspaper ads	55%	53%	50%	53%
TV commercials	37%	42%	47%	38%
Other	7%	3%	3%	5%
Don't know	1%	2%	-	4%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(206)	(614)	(551)	(223)

Among the most frequent movie-goers, newspaper movie advertisements are recalled more than TV commercials (Table 34). Nearly every frequent movie-goer recalled looking at a movie advertisement in a newspaper in the past month, regardless of age.

Table 34. Past Month Recall of Newspaper Advertisements and TV Commercials, by Frequent Movie-Goers and Age

	Canada	United States		
	Frequent Movie-goers	Frequent Movie-goers		
	All Ages	All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Recall				
Newspaper ads	91%	94%	94%	91%
TV commercials	85%	88%	88%	89%
Base: Frequent Movie-goers	(32)	(153)	(164)	(35)

It is also evident from the results in Table 35 that newspaper movie advertisements are used for more than just an immediate information source when movie-goers are ready to go. Three-quarters of Canadian and United States movie-goers look at newspaper advertisements even when they are not going to the movies on that day. Twelve percent in Canada and 17 percent in the United States look at newspaper movie advertisements only when they want to go that day, and 1 and 8 percent respectively never look. Newspapers, then, can stimulate movie-going interest in advance as well as serve as a guide on the day of attendance. Canadian movie-goers are more habitual users of newspaper movie advertisements than United States movie-goers (27% to 12%).

Table 35. The Way People Look at Newspaper Movie Advertisements, by Age

	Canada	United States		
Look	All Ages	All Ages	18-34 Yrs. Old	35-49 Yrs. Old
Almost every time see newspaper	27%	12%	10%	13%
Often to see what's playing	12%	17%	19%	20%
Occasionally even when not going	35%	46%	44%	45%
Only when want to go that day	25%	17%	18%	17%
Never	1%	8%	9%	5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(127)	(614)	(557)	(223)

Importance of Credits in Movie Advertisements

The typical newspaper movie advertisement has a long list of key people who participated in the making of the film. How important do readers think these credits are in advertisements? We asked them the direct question, and Table 36 presents the results. Only the names of actors are considered to be important in movie advertisements by a substantial majority.

Table 36. Importance of Specific Credits in Newspaper Movie Advertisements

	United States		Canada	
Important to Include	Movie-goers	Frequent Movie-goers	Movie-goers	Frequent Movie-goers
Actors	87%	88%	92%	91%
Who does the music	47%	52%	50%	61%
Director	43%	54%	39%	49%
Producer	35%	36%	35%	39%
Screenplay author	30%	35%	31%	30%
Executive producer	22%	28%	29%	35%
Director of photography	20%	30%	24%	21%
Associate producer	11%	14%	15%	18%
Base: Movie-goers	(614)	(153)	(127)	(32)

Newspaper Movie Reviews

More people are paying attention to movie reviews in newspapers. In 1973, 25 percent of the United States sample looked at newspaper movie reviews most or every time they were in the paper, and in 1981, 29 percent looked at them as frequently. Occasional references to reviews were made by 33 percent in 1973 and by 39 percent in 1981. This change is another key indicator that people have become more interested in getting more detailed information about movies, and the change may also be a sign of the changing times. People are less satisfied with limited information, no matter how attractively it may be presented. But what impact do reviews have on movie-going?

The data strongly suggest that newspaper movie reviews are not a critical or major factor in the decision making process but that, to the extent that reviews influence movie-going, the net effect is to encourage movie-going rather than discourage it.

To begin with, results in Table 37 show that a small minority of movie-goers would be discouraged from seeing a specific movie because a movie review was negative toward the film. None of the Canadian frequent movie-goers would be definitely discouraged. About half said negative reviews would have no effect at all.

Table 37. Movie-Going Effects of Negative Movie Reviews

Effect	United States		Canada	
	Movie-goers	Frequent Movie-goers	Movie-goers	Frequent Movie-goers
Definitely discourage	12%	11%	5%	-
Think twice, but maybe go anyway	41%	42%	44%	45%
No effect	47%	47%	51%	55%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(614)	(153)	(127)	(32)

A positive newspaper movie review, on the other hand, is much more likely to definitely encourage seeing a movie than a negative review is to definitely discourage seeing it (Table 38). Twenty-nine percent of United States movie-goers and 26 percent of Canadian movie-goers said a positive review would definitely encourage them to see a movie, and about 4 out of 10 said it would encourage them a little. About a third or less reported no effect of positive movie reviews. Canadians are less affected by reviews than movie-goers in the United States, but when they are affected, it is in the direction of encouraging attendance rather than discouraging it.

Table 38. Movie-Going Effects of Positive Movie Reviews

Effect	United States		Canada	
	Movie-goers	Frequent Movie-goers	Movie-goers	Frequent Movie-goers
Definitely encourage	29%	35%	26%	25%
Encourage a little	40%	38%	43%	39%
No effect	31%	27%	31%	36%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Base: Movie-goers	(614)	(153)	(127)	(32)

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The following tables are provided for the reader who is interested in obtaining a quick estimate either of the stability of a given percentage or of the significance of the difference between two percentages.

Confidence Intervals for a Given Percentage
(at the 95% confidence level)

N (Base for %)	Reported Percentage				
	10 or 90%	20 or 80%	30 or 70%	40 or 60%	50%
500	2.6	3.5	4.0	4.3	4.4
250	3.7	5.0	5.7	6.1	6.2
200	4.2	5.5	6.3	6.8	6.9
150	4.8	6.4	7.3	7.8	8.0
100	5.9	7.8	9.0	9.6	9.8
50	8.3	11.1	12.7	11.6	13.9
25	11.8	15.7	18.0	19.2	19.6

Example: If a report shows that 20% of all respondents (when N = 500) answer in a particular way, the chances are about 95 out of 100 that the true value is 20% or - 3.5%, that is, that the range 23.5%-16.5% contains the true value.

Significance of Differences Between Percentages
(95% confidence level)

Average of the Base of Percentages Being Compared	Average of Reported Percentages				
	10 or 90%	20 or 80%	30 or 70%	40 or 60%	50%
500	3.7	4.9	5.7	6.1	6.2
250	5.2	7.1	8.1	8.6	8.8
200	5.9	7.8	8.9	9.6	9.8
150	6.8	9.1	10.3	11.0	11.3
100	8.3	11.0	12.7	13.6	13.9
50	11.7	15.7	18.0	19.2	19.7
25	16.7	22.2	25.2	27.2	27.7

Example: A report shows that 33% of all respondents from 30 to 39 years of age use a certain product and that only 27% of all respondents in the 40-to-49 age group use that product. Could this difference be due to chance?

In this example assume an average base of 500 for the represented percentages. The average of the percentages (33 + 27) equals 30% and the difference between the percentages is 6%.

Since 6% is greater than 5.7 (the figure in the table for this base and percentage) the chances are about 95 out of 100 that the product is used more by the 30-39 age group.

The table values are based on an assumption of simple random sampling. The figures may be too large if a stratified sampling technique was used and probably are too small if a cluster sampling technique was utilized. (For formulas used, see McNemar, Psychological Statistics, pages 54, 60.) The second table should be used with extreme caution if the bases being averaged are very different.